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A

LETTER

TO

THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD MAYOR,

Combe (H. C.)
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ON THE

STATE OF THE COUNTRY;

THE MEASURES

TO BE PURSUED,

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN PEACE;

AND

HIS LORDSHIP'S DUTY AT THE PRESENT CRISIS.

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A

LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. THE LORD MAYOR,

&c. &c.

MY LORD,

AN opportunity which may be improved to the immortality of him who enjoys it is a rare occurrence in the life of any man. The powers, moral and intellectual, which fit their poſſeſſor for eminence, and entitle him to diſtinction, ſleep in perpetual inactivity, if not called forth by ſome great occaſion. It is the privilege of ſuperior minds to ſeize the happy moment, charged with great events, and to connect their names with the hiſtory of nations and the fate of empires. The ſphere of perſonal exiſtence is too ſcanty for ſuch minds as theſe; they look forward to futurity, and aſpire to live in the gratitude and praiſes of unborn generations. A Lord Mayor of London, in the ordinary diſcharge of ordinary duty, the tool and the jeſt of intriguing miniſters, lolling in a gilt coach, the tawdry canopy of which has been the covering of men

whoſe names never were pronounced one day longer than the term of their office, beyond the limits of their narrow circle of relationſhip, is a moſt vulgar thing. The name has been the title of butchers and of bricklayers; and the honour has been enjoyed by thoſe to whoſe characters are attached whatever expoſes ignorant, uncultivated, and unprincipled men, to the neglect and ſcorn of their own ſpecies. To fill the office of conſtable, in the humbleſt pariſh of the humbleſt town that the country contains, is as honourable as to fill the office of Lord Mayor of London, in the way in which the duties of that office are diſcharged. Aſk your next neighbour for the names of the laſt ten who filled that office, and he will be obliged to ſeek an anſwer in the periodical publications of the laſt ten years. Their names ſleep in the chambers of corruption, and their fame is given to the worms. Not an act of public good meets the eye to diſtinguiſh their ſtep in the muddy path they have trodden; whilſt the names of Bernard and Beckford are taught by the citizens to their children, as men who dignified the office they held, and ſtretched forth the hand of power, to protect and benefit the people. Peace to their aſhes! They oppoſed the corruption of the court, and their names ſhall know no corruption. Bernard was a man of more than ordinary powers, though of little early cultivation: but Beckford boaſted of no intellectual pre-eminence,—the love of his country, and an important criſis, ſupplied him with the

means of true diſtinction. No matter with what wing their genius flew; they, of all the Lord Mayors which we have had in two generations, were ſeen to move in the region of Fame.

They were, however, favoured by circumſtances. They lived in times when corruption threatened to overwhelm the citizen at his very home. They heard the roar of the cataracts iſſuing from the Court, and boldly placed their breaſts againſt the foaming flood. We bleſs the hands which open for the people a road through mountains, wilds, and deſerts; but warmer thanks are due to thoſe who ſtem the tide of lawleſs power, and preſerve the cottage in its place. Fame is to be acquired by overcoming difficulty. The hiſtory of illuſtrious Engliſhmen diſplays upon its page only the names of the oppoſers of the court in all ages, a power againſt which the true patriot is ever on the watch. The conqueror derives his glory from the power of his enemy. The might of Hector conſtitutes the triumph of Achilles.

My Lord, this is a moment auſpicious to your fame. Your character will appear from the uſe you make of it. Never did ſo black a cloud hang over any country, threatening a miſerable people with its dreadful contents. The land trembles with apprehenſion, and the long abuſed, long deluded and devoted people, *ſeem* now to perceive the *cauſe* of the impending calamity. They have traced it to the adviſers of their King, and they *ſeem* deſirous of ſhowing him *his* danger and *their own.*—

Become the preſiding genius at their deliberations; throw open the doors of your Manſion-houſe, and call the citizens together; carry their complaints to the Throne; appal thoſe who have led Majeſty aſtray; and ſpeak to the King the honeſt language of Freemen. The inhabitants of every town, of every county, will follow the great example, and the will of the People will guide the conduct of the Court.

The *alternative* is before us;—we muſt have *peace*, or we ſhall have *ruin*.

Is it neceſſary to run over the evidence of this? The ſumming up ſhall be ſhort, but the recital weighty. Be patient, my Lord, and hear me. I do not ſtop to ſhow, that as the commencement of the war was immoral, its continuance muſt be immoral. To a country which could bear the project of ſtarving to death thirty millions of people all conſiderations of morality muſt appear trivial. I urge not religion and Chriſtianity upon thoſe who hypocritically profeſs them; for the banners of Death have been conſecrated on the altars of Love; and Chriſt has been preached as the miniſter, not of peace, but of blood. Topics like theſe are little ſuited to a people who love no God but Mammon, and who only name the God of Juſtice when they mean to deceive! I touch only upon topics which meet capacities and hearts ſuch as theſe, which ſpeak to the ruin of credit, the deſtruction of property, and the introduction of anarchy. Compared to the high and holy concerns of morality and

conſcience, theſe, indeed, are low and vulgar topics; —but pearls muſt not be thrown to ſwine; the food muſt be adapted to the creature and to the appetite.

The expenditure of this country ſince the commencement of the war, now nearly ſeven long years, has not been leſs than forty-five millions ſterling per annum. I include in this ſum whatever has been paid by Government for intereſt of money, and expended upon the means of war. I ſtate the full, perhaps, but not more than the full expenditure of Government, by what means ſoever raiſed,—loans, taxes, contributions, &c. Mr. Pitt took the whole income of the whole people, whether derived from the ſoil of this iſland, from the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, or any other of the dependencies of this country, at one hundred millions per annum, when he laid upon us the tax upon income. The calculation has been *proved* to be enormouſly exceſſive. A tenth of this whole income has not produced ſix millions; ſo that the whole income falls ſhort of ſixty millions per annum. I have here taken an exceſſive ſtatement; for the income-tax will, it is ſaid, not exceed in production five millions. Fifty millions ſterling was, perhaps, above the whole income of the people even laſt year: for it ought not to be forgotten, that Mr. Pitt's tenth of income much more than repreſents a tenth of the whole net-income of the people. It is a tenth of that income, paid over and over again. No man is ſuffered, in his ſtatement of income, to

deduct all the taxes he has paid; and even the *expenditure* of Government itself becomes the income of individuals, and a tenth of this income is paid again to Government. Placemen, pensioners, commissaries, &c. pay to Government a tenth of their income, as do all great officers in the army and navy: thus does Mr. Pitt's tenth of income much more than represent double that proportion of the income of the whole people. The indirect taxes which the people pay, and which they cannot deduct from their statement of income, are of enormous magnitude.

Nor is this statement taken from a year of scarcity. On the contrary, the productions of the East and West Indies were allowed last year by Mr. Pitt, and he made it matter of much exultation, to exceed any thing ever known in this country. Such was the confidence of the minister, in the productiveness of the trade of the West Indies, that he reduced a little the drawbacks upon its articles, and told us that this reduction would pay all the interest of the debt for which he had then to provide, and release him from the necessity of any fresh taxation.

We shall soon see, in this, as in other particulars of finance, how grosly he has been deceived; but we may here pause a moment over the preceding statement. It must appear, to the most superficial understanding, that the annual expenditure of our Government during this war has greatly exceeded the whole net-income of the whole people, col-

lected not from the ſoil on which we tread merely, but from the four winds; and, taking the calculation in a year too, productive beyond all others that ever went before it. What muſt be the comment of every man of underſtanding upon ſuch a document as this?—certainly that a national bankruptcy *is certain* if the war be continued, and *not far diſtant*. It is not in the power of political arithmetic to calculate the moment of a national bankruptcy, becauſe it cannot aſcertain, by any of its operations, the extent of a people's credulity. But it can declare that to be *certain*, whoſe date it cannot fix; for credulity itſelf, like the power of man, has limits. Already the credulity of the people has been brought to a good account. They have been reconciled to receive paper inſtead of caſh, and to conſider paper as the *ultimate* repreſentation of valuable property.

The mines of Potoſi would not have afforded the miniſter greater relief than he has gained by this expedient; but let it be remembered, that he has *it not again to reſort to*, that its force is in actual and full operation, and that ſuch an expedient, not new in the hiſtory of finance, was yet *never found to ſtop ſhort of ruin* *.

* I demand one example where paper-currency was made a legal tender, and where this regulation was not followed ultimately by the ruin of its credit? It is idle to ſay, that our bank-notes are not now a legal tender; for although they are not ſtrictly ſo, yet to all practical purpoſes they are ſo, and muſt and

It is a ſtimulant which has always ended in the death of the patient. *Fas eſt et ab hoſte doceri:*—and the hiſtory of monarchical and republican France affords us a leſſon. We might extract from thence a clinical lecture for the inſtruction of ſtudents in finance.

Mr. Pitt has, indeed, acted wiſely in availing himſelf of the credit of an old eſtabliſhment; it will enable him more completely to ſeal the ruin of the country, by a protraction of confidence: but, as at the moment when one Bank-note ceaſes to repreſent actual property we date the commencement of ruin, ſo at the moment that this fact *becomes obvious to the public* actual confuſion and ruin will take place. The caſe is like that of a man who dies through fear. The ſpectre may long exiſt, and his peace be continued; but the moment his eye ſtrikes the object, he periſhes.

After reflecting upon the preceding ſtatement, upon the calculation of the laſt flouriſhing year of commercial proſperity, it is neceſſary now to contemplate the ſad reverſe, and view our preſent proſpects of commerce and revenue; for we muſt never forget, that, as we have ſuſtained our expenſes *by commerce*, without this mine continues open and productive, our debt is a ſtone already about our neck, which will grind us to powder.

Inſtead of the drawbacks which were diminiſhed

would be made ſo immediately, if the preſent regulation did not in fact operate as a legal tender.

laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, paying the intereſt to which they were to have been appropriated, Mr. Pitt has infinitely increaſed them, giving an additional bounty of eleven ſhillings per hundred weight where he had taken off only four; and a proportionate bounty upon every other article, the drawback from which he diminiſhed laſt ſeſſion. He has alſo, in order to force off the Weſt-India produce, taken off fourpence three-farthings duty from all waſh made in the diſtilleries from ſugar or molaſſes; and yet all the warehouſes in London are full of Weſt-India productions, and a whole fleet remains full in the River. In addition to all theſe deductions from the actual revenue of the country, Parliament has ſuffered the Weſt-India merchants to bond their ſugars, &c; and thence the revenue will, for the preſent at leaſt, ſuffer the ſuſpenſion of nearly two millions of its receipts. Indeed there is no proſpect whatever of ſugars bearing the duty they have lately paid, except the European markets change the whole aſpect of things in the Weſt-India trade. Parliament muſt be obliged to take off more than half of the duty on ſugar.

It is alſo probable that the wretched ſtate of the breweries in this country muſt force Parliament to diminiſh the duty on malt, and thus Government muſt be deprived, in part, of a permanent and productive tax. The land-tax is in a great meaſure done away, and the production of its ſale is a mere particle of ſand in the ſcale of our annual

expenditure; and, to crown the whole, the income-tax has fallen in production to one-half of the miniſter's eſtimate. From this view of progreſſive diminution of income, at a moment of progreſſive increaſe of expenditure, let us turn to the contemplation of individual, I had almoſt ſaid general, bankruptcy.

It is a fact too notorious to admit either of denial or diſpute, that nine-tenths, at leaſt of the whole, if not actually the whole body of Weſt-India merchants, muſt have inſtantly ſtopped payment, if the late immenſe iſſue of Exchequer-bills in their favour had not taken place. By the aid of this paper (and all our currency is now paper of one denomination or another) they are enabled to pay their acceptances, as they are preſented to them from the Weſt Indies; but except they find a market for the productions they hold, and there are at preſent no appearances of a market, how will it be poſſible for them to re-pay the loan to Government? I ſee no poſſible way of doing this: and if the goods held in pledge by Government be ſold to make ſuch payment, they muſt be ſold at 50 per cent. below the duty paid upon them, and charges of bringing home, without allowing one penny to the planter for his produce.—The credit of the town of Liverpool is ſhaken from the ſame cauſe; and from being the moſt flouriſhing town in the kingdom, "ſcarcely *ſcratched* by the war," to uſe the language of Mr. Wyndham, which he has bor-

rowed from ſome of his *Scotch* friends, it is to be feared that it is, or will ſoon be, one of the moſt miſerable, diſtracted, and ruined ſea-ports we have. The Americans too are involved in the ruin that the temporary extinction of demand for Weſt-India productions has occaſioned; and as the American merchants are not *capitaliſts*, but are chiefly ſupported by Britiſh capital, we ſhall catch, by rebound, the ſtroke by which they are ſmitten. More than ſeventy merchants reſident in Hamburg and England, connected with that ill-fated town, have failed; and many more are expected. The calamity which this is every moment ſpreading in England it is needleſs to deſcribe.

Now, as the wealth of a nation is no other than the aggregate of the wealth of individuals, theſe proſpects of *general* inſolvency threaten a *national inſolvency*. The people impoveriſhed cannot conſume the taxed commodity; the taxes muſt become unproductive, and the direct tax upon income, &c. will become a "*tale that is told.*"

We have heard, from the miniſters of the Crown, of individual inſolvency being a proof of individual proſperity; and why may they not, in time, tell us, that national inſolvency is a proof of national proſperity? There is nothing too abſurd or inſulting for their mouths: for what credit are they entitled to, who offer reſolutions to a great aſſembly, upon finance, abounding with *additions and ſubtractions notoriouſly falſe, and founded upon prin-*

ciples utterly repugnant to all knowledge of the power of intereſt or the value of annuities * ?

Now, my Lord, let us turn from this gloomy view of the revenue and expenditure to the cheerleſs contemplation of our conduct of the war, and the probability of thoſe concluding it who have begun and continued it. After a ſtruggle of many years, in which ſuch a ſeries of victories crowned the labours of the enemy, as was never before the boaſt of any country, a few unlooked-for ſucceſſes of the arms of the allies ſo elated the puerile minds of the King's miniſters, that they publicly boaſted that they would invade France, and give to that mighty people ſuch a conſtitution as they, their conquerors, ſhould chuſe. Pitt and Wyndham declared, "that *after* the countries conquered by the Republic were wreſted from it,

* A paper ſigned *M. N.* in the Monthly Magazine for this month (November), expoſes theſe reſolutions to the deriſion of all men. This paper is an admirable production, and comes from the hand of a maſter. Public report, and, I think, internal evidence, fixes it upon Mr. Morgan, a financier and calculator, than whom no country ever produced a ſuperior. If ever this country recovers the uſe of its underſtanding, this man will be called from a private inſtitution, of which he is the ſupport, and on whoſe accuracy have been built its unexampled proſperity and conſequence, to ſome more public ſituation. It ought not to be forgotten, that the great *financier* and *politician*, Mr. Tierney, was unable to detect any fallacy of principle or inaccuracy of ſtatement in theſe *monſtrous propoſitions*. I earneſtly recommend it to every man, who would juſtly eſtimate the Chancellor of the Exchequer's financial merit, to read this incomparable paper.

ſtill much remained to be done," intimating that they would dictate laws to France. The Dutch expedition was to crown the ſcheme of conqueſt, and their *rightful ſovereign* be placed over the Batavian, and the *grand monarque* over the French people.

Impartial hiſtorians! this expedition is now yours. You will deſcribe the gallantry of the Batavians, the French, the Ruſſians, and the Engliſh. Dundas ſaid, that the expedition was *truly Britiſh:* if ſo, you will tell us whether it adds new honours to the Britiſh name? Britons! ſhall we turn our eyes from your ſlaughtered thouſands, on the ſhores of Batavia, to tell the *coſt* of this expedition? Yes, the Engliſh muſt have every thing in their own ſtyle. How much *money* has been expended? This is the conſtant, the *only* queſtion. There was a time when *national honour* was ſomething, when *humanity was ſomething* to Engliſhmen; but ſince ſo many Scotch vermin have crept near the throne, the whole vocabulary of *Britons* contains but one word—"*money.*" Burke lamented that the age of calculators was come. I too lament it much, when the cauſe of truth, honour, and humanity, is held ſo cheap. But we are peculiarly unfortunate, for we have calculators without calculation, economiſts without economy; and I wiſh that we even conſulted *calculation* and *economy*, for they, in this inſtance, would conduct us to the temple of Peace and the altar of Humanity. What then is the

coſt of this expedition? Diffidence itſelf will reply, that it will at leaſt exceed the production of the income-tax. Do we inquire for the reſults of this war? Our anſwer we may receive from Dutchmen, the inhabitants of Flanders, the Swiſs, the Italians; nor will Egypt herſelf be ſilent in the general reſponſe. Yet after the conquered countries are wreſted from France, *much will remain to be done!* Are theſe ridiculous puerilities heard from men whom you expect to terminate the war? No; their folly, their virulence, their duplicity, their bad faith in former negotiations, make it impoſſible, that any peace, either honourable or permanent, ſhould be obtained by them.

Mr. Pitt and his aſſociates are men of *little minds*. I wiſh not to deny to Mr. Pitt any part of his merit. I am not ignorant of his abilities; but I repeat it, he and his aſſociates are men of little minds. When I perceive a wiſh to inſult fallen greatneſs, to purſue the helpleſs with vengeance, with a vengeance which is even whetted by proſperity,—I mean the proſperity of the perſecutors,—when I ſee inſidious arts uſed to ſever private friendſhips, and excite diſtruſt; when I ſee arrogance crouch to thoſe whom it has inſulted,—and theſe and much more I perceive in Mr. Pitt and his aſſociates,—I pronounce them men of *little minds*, equally incapable of eſtimating or imitating a great character. Mr. Pitt, however, has talents. Schooled from the earlieſt youth by a father whoſe trade was the trick

of public parliamentary debate, and who by that trick had riſen to fortune and to title, by him our premier was taught language, and inſtructed in eloquence by the maſters of Greece and Rome. His father knew that England was, and had long been, the dupe of debaters, and he ſpared no pains to make his ſon a ready ſpeaker, and a prompt debater. Cheſterfield ſaid, this was every thing required to advance a man in England, and Chatham experienced what Cheſterfield taught. Qualified with a happy conformation of his bodily organs, and by a ſtore of words, the eloquence of Mr. Pitt is ready, eaſy, and copious. He can ſpeak as a man who has been taught to ſpeak: he is a great debater, and in no higher order of merit as a ſpeaker is he placed by Mr. Burke. That powerful ſpeaker well knew that the eloquence of Mr. Pitt was deſtitute of the energy, the force, and the meteorous flaſhes of genius. You hear him with pleaſure as one who has well performed his taſk; but no ſentence is engraven upon your mind; you catch no aphoriſm of great ſtrength or beauty, for general uſe. He comes to the conteſt more in the form of a gladiator, than in that of Mars. Still as a *debater* he claims the higheſt reſpect; but beſides this he is nothing. The people of this country, long accuſtomed to chuſe, and to ſee choſen for the offices of authority and truſt, men *for this talent only*, have, by a natural aſſociation of ideas, thought

every great public debater muſt neceſſarily be a great ſtateſman. There is, however, no more connection between the talents and attainments which qualify for a debater in the Houſe of Commons, and thoſe which qualify for projecting and eſtabliſhing extenſive plans of general policy, than there is between the qualifications of a phyſician and a general. Mr. Pitt can ſpeak in public, Mr. Pitt can, therefore, draw and ſettle the plan of a military expedition! Mr. Pitt is a ſpeaker; why then is he not placed at the head of our armies? Why may not the leader of the Houſe of Commons lead an army into the field? The talent for debate which he poſſeſſes, qualifies him, indeed, as much for captain-general as it does for chancellor of the exchequer. He ſpoke well enough, ſurely moſt eloquently did he ſpeak, when he introduced theſe reſolutions, falſe and ridiculous in principle, and even with *falſe additions* and ſubtractions.

Theſe reſolutions, whatever beſides they do, or do not prove, prove that he knows nothing of finance; and as to his powers in debate upon the queſtion, it is eaſy to diſpute with thoſe who have nothing to ſay, and with ſuch as Tierney, a man even more ignorant then himſelf.

Mr. Pitt is a great debater, therefore he is qualified to be an admiral: his promptitude in ſpeech proves him to poſſeſs all the knowledge of Howe, Jervis, and Nelſon united!—Stupid and be-

ſotted people! who ever before confounded talents ſo unconnected!—Was Newton a ſpeaker? He was not. Was he then no philoſopher? Franklin and Monteſquieu were no debaters: were they then not ſtateſmen? Mr. Pitt is a great debater: is he then a ſtateſman? Are not many pleaders at the bar great debaters; but who ever concluded that they were great ſtateſmen?

Machiavel, Turgot, Locke, you were no debaters, and ought not therefore to be numbered amongſt ſtateſmen! I demand a *proof*, one ſingle ſolitary proof, that Mr. Pitt is a ſtateſman. What has *he* done for the advantage of this country*? To have exiſted in proſperous or diſaſtrous times, as the miniſter of the Crown, proves nothing. I want to trace *his agency* in the good of the country, and I demand

* In the commencement of his political career, Mr. Pitt had many friends and admirers, who have ſince abandoned him; but from all that I have been able to learn from them on the ſubject, they admired him for what he *promiſed* to do, not for what he did. It has often ſtruck me, as a great ſingularity, that men of ſagacity, and men too who had long been the contemporaries of Lord Chatham, and ought to have known him, and the education he had given to his ſon, could be ſo infatuated as to confide in any promiſes made by Mr. Pitt. If Mr. Tooke had underſtood men, as well as he underſtands grammar, he would never have been the admirer of Mr. Pitt, nor would he ever have written the two pair of Portraits, which, although groſsly erroneous in ſtatement, may yet, in point of compoſition, be compared to the faireſt models of Engliſh ſtyle.

that it be pointed out. Before he began to intermeddle with war, trade and commerce flouriſhed in his time; but as truly may it be affirmed, that the great men who flouriſhed in the reign of Queen Anne derived their talents from that weak woman, as that trade borrowed its vigour from Mr. Pitt. America opened a natural market for our productions, and the inventions of Arkwright prepared for Europe and America a cheap commodity. The commercial treaty with France was indeed a meaſure of Mr. Pitt's, and certainly a wiſe and good one: but it had been a far more noble achievement, if, inſtead of a commerical treaty, he had opened commerce to the world, and the world to commerce, upon the enlightened principles of Adam Smith. To a man who underſtands theſe principles, this treaty is only a leſs evil (for all political commercial regulations are evils) than the former prohibitions. Mr. Pitt has been the evil genius of Commerce. He ſaw her proſperous, and he made war upon her proſperity. 'Periſh commerce,' whether it was, or was not, the language of any ſenator, is the language of this unneceſſary and voluntary war. Let the war live, and commerce ſhall indeed periſh.

But Mr. Pitt's friends ſay, that by foreign war he has preſerved domeſtic peace. If he has deſtroyed commerce, they contend that he has ſaved the conſtitution. This, like every thing elſe,

is eaſily ſaid. It is *a mere hypotheſis*; but, as it repreſents the war as a ſtroke of policy, as the ſcheme of *ſtateſmen*, we will examine it.

It will hardly be affirmed, that the war has proſelyted any to the royal cauſe, who before were friendly to democracy.

If this cannot be contended, it muſt be admitted, that as the ſame maſs of loyalty exiſted in the country, it would have been as eaſy to have formed the armed volunteer aſſociations *without* as *with* the war: and we have the authority of royalty itſelf to ſay, that theſe aſſociations are ſufficient to keep down ſedition in the country. It can then only be contended, that foreign war has prevented domeſtic war, by *weakening the French Republic.* How then has the French Republic been weakened? It has poſſeſſed itſelf of nearly one-half of Europe; and, with its allies, it is more than equal to all the reſt of Europe united. All the powers of Europe, with which it has contended, have in ſucceſſion fallen before its arms. It is true, that we have gotten from France many iſlands in the Weſt, and ſome territory in the Eaſt Indies. Theſe may enable us the better to ſupport *foreign war*, but can ſurely tend little to preſerve our domeſtic peace. If we derive any domeſtic proſperity from this acceſſion of territory in the Eaſt or the Weſt, that, ſome may ſuppoſe, will tend to the preſervation of peace amongſt us. But this argument will fail them, becauſe we have ſpent fifty times as much

in the war as we have gotten by this acceſſion of territory. A ſtate of war is a ſtate of uncertainty and peril. As this war has afforded to the French Republic the motive and the power to ſpread its triumphs over Europe, and even over Egypt, who can tell that its continuance ſhall not give to its armies *our own country?* The ſhip at ſea of the beſt fabric, and on the ſmootheſt ſurface, before the gentleſt gale, is yet *at ſea*, and thus ſubjected to every change of wind, and every fluctuation of the moſt uncertain of elements.

Will it yet be aſked, With whom are we to treat for peace? The anſwer is at hand: With that power with which we war.—What is that power? Not the power of Briſſot, of Robeſpierre, of Reubell, of Barras, or of Sieyes. Not the power of the Directory that is, or of the Directory that was. Not the power of the conſtituent or legiſlative aſſemblies, or of the councils:—for we have fought with France through all the changes of its governors, and the continuation of the conflict ſhows that we fight with the French Nation, the *French People*, whoſe republican *will* is now ſpoken by this man, and now by that, now by this, and now by that council; but whoſe *will* is ſtill republican, by whomſoever ſhe ſpeaks it. We fight with the French People, and with them, through ſome authoriſed agent, we muſt treat.

The various changes of the governing powers in France, and the continuance of war through all

theſe changes, prove to demonſtration, that our Government wars with the *French People*; but the uniformity of our Government, and even of our Miniſtry, during this war, affords no proof that the French war with the *Engliſh Nation*. The French, for any thing that appears to the contrary, are at war only with the Engliſh Miniſtry, with a ſet of men who, identifying themſelves with the hereditary government of the country, abuſe the power they wield, to the deſtruction of the nation, whoſe intereſts they ſacrifice to their own ambition, malice, and revenge.

This point ought to be proved. Let the miniſtry be changed at leaſt, that the national *will* may have ſome chance to appear. This is rendered a neceſſary ſtep by the perſonal exaſperation and inſult which this Miniſtry has given to the repreſentatives of France, and by their bad faith in former attempts at negotiation. It is at leaſt probable that the war-making miniſters of this country, if they poſſeſs any conſiſtency or honour, any of that holy pride, the oppoſite of empty arrogance, which great minds feel, muſt feel a ſtrong perſonal motive againſt concluding a peace upon terms (and only ſuch terms can be had) which ſhall reflect diſgrace upon themſelves, as volunteers in the commencement of hoſtilities: and it is probable alſo, that the repreſentatives of the French people will feel an inclination to exact ſeverer terms from men who have inſulted, affected to

deſpiſe, and threatened to ſtarve them, than from men innocent of ſuch ridiculous and atrocious conduct. To deny that theſe are probabilities is to deny all experience, and the exiſtence of every law by which human-nature is governed. This conſideration is, of itſelf, a reaſon ſufficiently ſtrong, why the preſent miniſtry ſhould be driven from their places. The *national will* has been unequivocally expreſſed by petitions in favour of peace, and it is only prevented from operating by a ſet of men who have ſuppreſſed all public meetings, taken away the liberty of ſpeech, and attempted to ſubdue the national ſpirit into ſubmiſſion to their tyranny.

It is probable, however, that there is no meanneſs to which theſe men will not ſubmit; that there is no humiliation, even before the repreſentatives of a great people, whom they have inſulted, to which they will not reconcile themſelves, rather than reſign their places and their profits. The biographer of Sir Robert Walpole, in the conduct of Sir Robert, has ſhown us, that there is no meanneſs, however degrading, to which a prime-miniſter, who has long enjoyed power, will not ſubmit, rather than be deprived of his emoluments and influence. It is diſgraceful to Mr. Coxe, that he records ſuch inſtances in Sir Robert's conduct, without the reprobation which becomes a man. Sir Robert Walpole was, however, a nobler ſpirit than Mr. Pitt; and his conduct to his enemy, Lord

Bolingbroke, ſhows that he could not have deſcended to that puerility of inſult, to which Mr. Pitt ſtooped in adviſing the King to ſtrike the name of Mr. Fox from the liſt of privy-counſellors.

Let the *national will* be conſulted. If to change the Miniſtry be not ſufficient to this end, let the King be called upon to diſſolve the Parliament, and let a new repreſentation ſpeak the language of the People. Will not this be ſufficient? It certainly will, if the people of England be really repreſented in Parliament; and if they are not, it is time that they ſhould be, and that they ſhould ſee that they are. They have petitioned for peace; and the Miniſtry has replied to their petitions by the roar of cannon, and the ravages of war. They are not, therefore, the people's miniſters. Let the people chuſe a Parliament, and let the ſame experiment determine whether they are repreſented, or live under a tyranny; for there is no alternative.

It is an unaccountable infatuation which has perſuaded the people of England that their comfort and exiſtence muſt depend upon the vibration of the tongue of the one or the other of two individuals. If Mr. Pitt be not our miniſter, we muſt have Mr. Fox. Ridiculous! I am certain that there are hundreds of men in this country better qualified by talents, education, application, good principles and conduct, to preſide over the affairs of this country, than either Mr. Fox or Mr. Pitt. Let a new Parliament be choſen, which

ſhall feel and expreſs the national will, and this aſſertion will be demonſtrated. There are, even in the preſent Parliament, men more likely to enjoy the confidence of the nation, and to benefit the nation, than either of theſe men. Mr. Grey is one of theſe men. When, however, I ſpeak of the talents and virtue which are to be found amongſt us, I ſpeak of the country, and not of the Parliament. Neither in thus ſpeaking of Mr. Fox do I mean any diſreſpect to him. Mr. Burke has properly called him one of the greateſt debaters the world ever knew. In this reſpect he is more accompliſhed than Mr. Pitt. He is a more accurate ſcholar, and he has a more powerful mind. The difference ſo marked in every part of their characters appears even in debate. Mr. Pitt accompliſhes his purpoſe by dexterity and management in the *argumentum ad hominem*; Mr. Fox by the ſtrength of his faculties, which views a ſubject on all ſides, and perceives, with the rapidity of lightning, the agreement and diſagreement of things. Mr. Pitt is a formidable opponent in debate, by the vigilance with which he watches his adverſary; Mr. Fox by the juſtneſs and readineſs of his conceptions of his ſubject in all its ramifications and bearings.

Mr. Fox diſdains the tricks of the mere declaimer, whoſe net is ſpread out only to catch men, and to obtain votes; but this is the whole end and object of Mr. Pitt. Mr. Fox's character mixes with his eloquence: he *feels* his ſubject,

and is intereſted by the queſtion before him, as he powerfully *feels* the pleaſures, the pains, and the anxieties of friendſhip. Mr. Pitt is an actor; Mr. Fox is a man. Mr. Fox is all generoſity, all magnaminity; he cannot ſtoop to knaves and fools, neither knows he how to triumph over a fallen enemy. All who love any thing but themſelves love Mr. Fox. Yet who can praiſe his political life? Ever the dupe of his affectionate heart, he has been led aſtray by every corrupt party with which he has been connected; and, during the long term of his political life, it would have been difficult for him to have found any party not corrupt. He has lately emancipated himſelf from his party; and now, as an individual, he is truly great, and worthy of confidence. But the nation needs him not, and he will diſhonour himſelf if he ever becomes again the head of a party. If the nation ſee an occaſion in which he can be uſeful, it will be honourable for him to act; but to lead a party is now too low, I truſt, for his ambition.

I think I have ſhown, my Lord, that our caſe is without remedy, if we do not immediately obtain *peace*; that the preſent Miniſtry are not likely to procure it for us; that a new Parliament and a new Miniſtry ſhould be choſen, and that the voice of the people, for this purpoſe, muſt be heard. The voice of the people is always awful, and never ſpeaks in vain. It is heard as the noiſe which precedes an earthquake.

Give utterance to that voice, my Lord, by every means in your power; ſave your country, and immortaliſe your name. Take in good part the addreſs of a *Freeman*;—a man, my Lord, who deſires no other inheritance for his children but the fair inheritance of the human race; who feels an ardour in the cauſe of humanity, which no obſtacles or diſappointments have been able to extinguiſh; and who wiſhes only to live to ſee the great family of mankind in the enjoyment of equal privileges in a world teeming with good, after their Herculean ſons have deſtroyed the ſerpents which now annoy them.

In the beginning of your career, I have offered you advice. I will obſerve your motions; and, at its cloſe, I hope to have reaſon to give you thanks, and not reproof.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's very humble Servant.

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